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ABSTRACT

Since 1976, the Correctional Clearinghouse (CCH), which is a unit of the Washington State Employment Security Department, has been committed to preparing offenders for the workplace and finding employment. The CCH's principal service delivery strategies are as follows: (1) providing direct services (teaching job readiness courses in prisons and contracting with community-based organizations to provide job search assistance to ex-offenders); (2) brokering services available from other agencies (helping a community college and state agency establish a for-credit college program integrating job search assistance with substance abuse treatment for ex-offenders in recovery); and (3) coordinating activities across agencies (arranging for inmates to produce and distribute the statewide computerized Case Management Resource Directory). CCH's continuum of services to prisoners, which begins with employability assessment during incarceration and ends with job placement and ongoing assistance after employment, has proved highly successful. In 1997-1998, at least 3,080 inmates completed a CCH employment or training activity in 5 of Washington's 15 correctional institutions. Of the 1,312 ex-offenders who received job search assistance through the CCH in 1996-1997, 776 were placed in jobs and 68% were still in those jobs after 45 days. (Seven sources of assistance in replicating the CCH model are listed.) (MN)

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Washington State's Corrections Clearinghouse: A Comprehensive Approach to Offender Employment

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Washington State's Corrections Clearinghouse: A Comprehensive Approach to Offender Employment

by Peter Finn

Dear Ms. Bates,

How are you doing? You're probably pretty busy, so I'll keep this kind of short.

Right now I'm working for _____. I'm getting $6 an hour, but that will change soon. I'm quality control and packager for the tile made during the night shift. After 3 days on the job, my boss wanted to start training me for the lead. Translation: I'll have two or three people working for me in about another month. I personally hate supervisory positions because I don't like telling people what to do. I don't mind showing or teaching somebody, but this is too much!

Highlights

The Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH), a unit of the Washington State Employment Security Department, illustrates one State's rare commitment, dedication of resources, and demonstrated results in preparing offenders for the workplace and finding employment for ex-offenders. Founded in 1976, CCH has pursued an unusually broad range of strategies for achieving these goals, including:

- **Providing** some direct services (for example, teaching job readiness courses in prisons and contracting with community-based organizations to provide job search assistance to ex-offenders).
- **Brokering** services available from other agencies (for example, bringing a community college and the State Department of Social and Health Services together to set up a for-credit college program that integrates job search assistance with substance abuse treatment for ex-offenders in recovery).
- **Coordinating** activities across agencies (for example, arranging for inmates to produce and distribute the statewide computerized Case Management Resource Directory).

CCH attempts to provide a continuum of services to prison inmates that begins with an employability assessment during incarceration and ends with job placement and ongoing assistance after employment. The program adds transitional program elements—from work ethics training to job search assistance—to meet the needs of different correctional institutions.

In fiscal year 1997–98, at least 3,080 inmates completed either a CCH employment or training activity available in 5 of the State's 15 institutions. Through contracts with community-based organizations, CCH provided job search assistance to 1,312 ex-offenders in fiscal year 1996–97. The contracted community-based organizations helped place 776 of the 1,312 CCH clients (nearly 60 percent) in jobs at an average cost of $276 per enrollee. After 45 days, 68 percent were still working on the job. Fifteen percent of 500 CCH clients who found employment had returned to DOC custody after 5 years, compared with a historic rate of 30 percent for all department releasees.

CCH also provides programs in all seven of the State's juvenile facilities and assists local jails in establishing jail industries and other employment training programs.

With an annual budget of nearly $1.8 million from the Employment Security Department, CCH's efforts are enhanced by more than $475,000 from DOC and more than $600,000 from the State Department of Social and Health Services.

Although it may seem a daunting task to replicate such a multifaceted program, other jurisdictions can start by offering job preparation classes to inmates and job search services to ex-offenders—and then add CCH's other components over time. This incremental approach would be in keeping with CCH's own evolution and its current status as a work in progress.

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Now all this is under the assumption you remember who I am. I don't blame you if you don't (yeah, I've always had no self-esteem), but in case you do . . . I want to thank you for a few things. One, being able to find a job. I couldn't have done it without the knowledge you gave me. I beat out quite a few people for that job (by the way, I'm working 12 hours a day, 5 days a week). What you taught me is very valuable, and I'll use it for years to come. The other is for taking the time to sit and talk with me. No one has done that for me before . . . . It helped me tremendously to know that you cared enough to take the time and talk with me. I don't think you'll ever know what a positive impact you've had on my life. You've definitely made a difference in one life: mine. Again, THANK YOU! You have made a difference. Not a whole lot of people get that chance.

I have to go (I'm rather tired), but I'll remember you for the rest of my life. Take care and good luck!

—Letter from an ex-offender to Shawn Bates, Corrections Clearinghouse Employment Specialist

In fiscal year 1996–97, Washington State had an average daily prison population of 12,677; more than 5,985 offenders were released from prison that year. The mission of the State's Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH), a branch of the Employment Security Department, is to work with correctional officials to provide services to motivate and enable these inmates and releasees—like the grateful ex-offender who wrote the letter above—to secure employment instead of resuming a life of crime.

CCH has grown considerably over time, and it continues to change to meet new challenges and expand its operations. (See "The Corrections Clearinghouse Has a Long History, but It's Still Evolving.") As of 1998, CCH was providing the following:

- **Direct services** in institutions and the community, such as vocational assessments, job preparation classes, and employment assistance.
- **Brokering services** such as bringing a community college and the State Department of Social and Health Services together to set up a for-credit program that integrates job search assistance with substance abuse treatment.
- **Coordination services** such as arranging the production and distribution of a statewide computerized Case Management Resource Directory.

Following are examples of the activities CCH conducts, brokers, and coordinates. What is especially distinctive about CCH undertakings as a whole is how they

The Corrections Clearinghouse Has a Long History, but It's Still Evolving

The Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH) grew out of the decline of the Seattle area airplane manufacturing industry in the early 1970s. As part of a number of reemployment programs that were developed at the time to assist laid-off workers, the State legislature provided funding for the Employment Security Department to establish the Ex-Offender Work Orientation Program to help newly released inmates find jobs. Prison riots in the 1970s also contributed to the legislature's and the Department of Corrections' (DOC's) interest in expanding the education and training services available to inmates.

Based on the success of the work orientation program—and his experience as a former parole officer—the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Employment Security Department worked with the DOC Secretary in 1976 to formalize and expand the link between the two departments as the newly formed Corrections Clearinghouse.

CCH's original mission was simply to serve as a coordinating body for adult offenders being released from prison. Over time, CCH has expanded its mission to include the following:

- Providing services within corrections facilities (1985).
- Serving juvenile offenders (1989).
- Promoting the development of employment skills training for jail inmates (1994).
- Preparing youths sentenced as adults for employment in prison industries (1998).

According to Anthony Clarke, CCH's Program Manager, in its early years, the program's biggest challenge was working with DOC administrators and line staff to make preparing inmates for meaningful work after release a top corrections priority. CCH sought to promote employment training through a newsletter on developments in the corrections field, which Clarke edited from 1988 to 1992. CCH took a giant step forward in 1987 when Douglas Jacques, who had been DOC's Assistant Deputy Director for Security, became Director of CCH, because he could talk to correctional staff from their perspective—that is, with hands-on knowledge and recognition that programming had to be secondary to security. Clarke says: "Defining, delivering, and maintaining a continuum of services for all levels of corrections is now CCH's biggest challenge."

create a *network* of State and local agencies capable of providing services that are generated and coordinated by a single entity—CCH.

At the same time, CCH attempts to provide a *continuum* of services beginning with vocational and work maturity assessments during incarceration and ending with job placements in the community. "Once these two pillars of program activities are in place," says Douglas Jacques, CCH's Director, "we add a variety of transitional program elements to meet the needs of different correctional institutions."

Direct Service Delivery

CCH's two principal forms of direct service delivery are the provision of institution courses and postrelease job search assistance. As of 1998, CCH had the resources and institutional interest to provide direct services in five adult and seven juvenile institutions. (See exhibit 1.)

Adult institutions

While community colleges focus on providing basic and special education services in Washington State prisons and CCH concentrates on providing employment-related services, potential for overlap in providing transition services exists. As a result, the Department of Corrections (DOC) requires that staff from CCH, the colleges, and facilities decide together what courses CCH will offer at each institution to provide continuity of services among the various providers. CCH includes these courses in its annual proposal to DOC. Based on available funding, DOC decides which courses to hire CCH to provide.

CCH staff in adult prisons offer several prerelease employment-related courses, including job dynamics and transitional employment. (See exhibit 2.) CCH staff also offer vocational assessments at one facility and industrial safety courses in two facilities to inmates participating in correctional industries or institutional work programs. Worksite supervisors use the assessment results to make institutional job placement decisions. For example, in deciding which inmates to accept into their programs, the vocational upholstery trainer at one facility relies in part on the results of a CCH-administered test that measures manual speed and dexterity and spacial relations, while the optical program instructor uses the results of a CCH test that shows whether inmates can work with negative numbers so they can read eyeglass prescriptions.

In addition to offering courses, CCH staff help inmates obtain Social Security cards, State identification cards, and other documents, as well as helping them register with JobNet, the Washington State job bank. (See "Prerelease job search assistance.") Inmates talk enthusiastically about the courses. According to a student in the transitional employment class at the Tacoma Pre-Release Center:

> At first, I felt the course was something I had to go through. But it turned out to be very informative; now I feel I can get a job. Before, I felt no one would hire an ex-offender. Filling out the job application was the most useful part, especially learning how to describe my qualifications. If I'd done it on my own, I would just have said, "maintenance work." I learned how to expand on my background and skills in ways employers would find attractive.

At the Washington Corrections Center for Women, CCH offers an unusual transition-to-trades initiative tailored to women offenders. After initial assessments and job readiness preparation by the CCH staff member in the women's institution, inmates are placed in various industry work assignments. To ensure the inmates succeed on the job, the CCH staff member leads them in classes that focus on working with supervisors, arriving on time, and related issues.

The trades initiative includes the following two innovative programs intended to enhance job knowledge and skills in nontraditional trades for women:

- **Women's apprenticeship program.** Capitalizing in part on his background as a journeyman meatcutter, CCH Director Jacques persuaded three unions—carpenters, laborers, and ironworkers—to fund and staff a preapprenticeship program for inmates in the women's correctional center. Women who successfully complete the Trades-Related Apprenticeship Coaching program are guaranteed union membership in one of the unions, thereby improving their chances of being hired after release. CCH also arranged for meetings that resulted in the unions training mentors to help the women succeed after release—for example, by providing guidance on how to deal with troublesome male coworkers. The prison also agreed to establish a recreation program to help women increase their upper body strength because it will aid them in the work.
- **Community service work crews.** The institution offers minimum security inmates offsite employment (for 40 cents an hour) on community

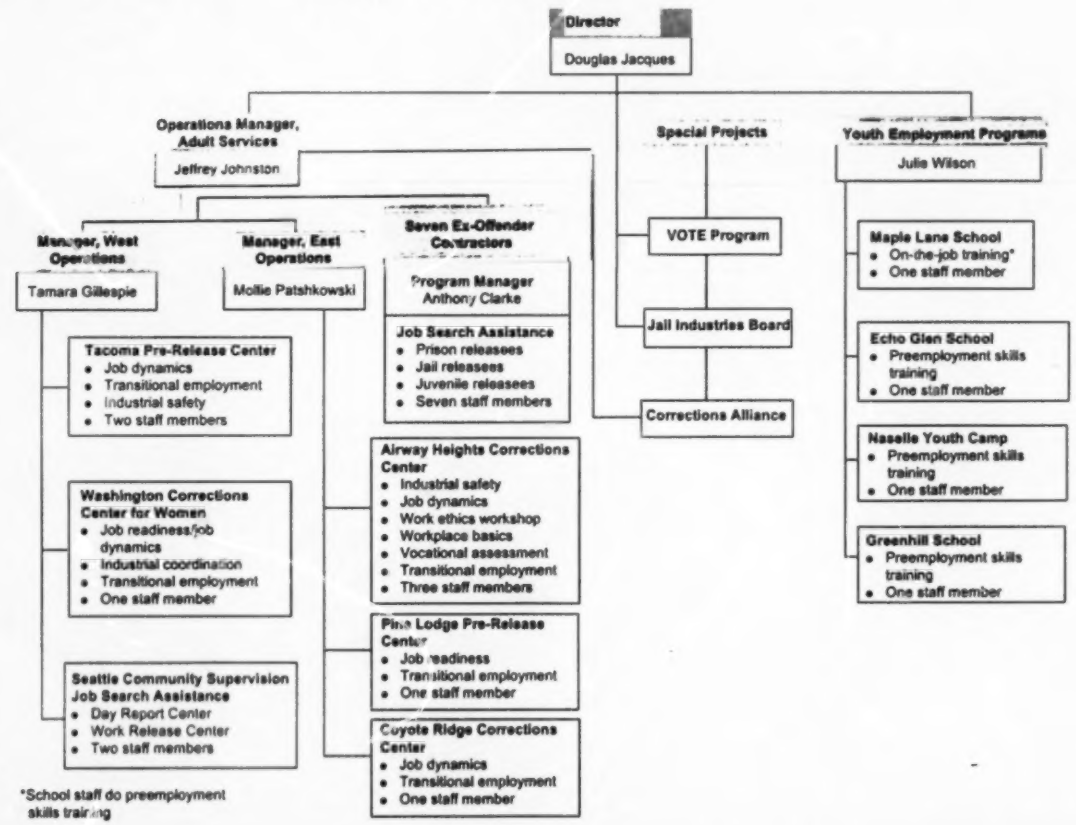
service crews that have refurbished low-income elderly housing, collected toys from donors and wrapped and prepared them for distribution, set up and removed Christmas lights and decorations at the zoo, and cleaned highways and illegal dump sites. The CCH staff person in the institution develops the jobs, schedules the crews, approves the sites, and supervises the custody staff who escort the crews.

Juvenile institutions

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration contracts with CCH to provide employment preparation services to incarcerated juveniles. Juvenile institution managers choose from a menu of services CCH offers, which includes:

- Career awareness classes.
- Classes integrating employability and academic skills.

Exhibit 1. Corrections Clearinghouse programs



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- Vocational testing.
- Employment preparation classes (work search techniques, résumé writing).
- Work maturity and work ethics classes.

CCH also has developed creative apprenticeship programs in some juvenile facilities. (See "Juveniles Develop Marketable Skills—and Give Back to the Community.") However, CCH's most requested service is to assess each juvenile's employability and develop a portfolio containing an employability development plan outlining the offender's needs and a service strategy for meeting them. CCH staff train both the juveniles and their institutions' education and training staff to use the portfolio as a case management tool for tracking and updating what inmates need to do to become employable (e.g., enroll in a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation program).

Prerelease job search assistance

CCH offers job search assistance to inmates in some adult and juvenile institutions even before they are released. At five prisons, CCH instructors register their students with the Employment Security Department, enabling them to access the department's JobNet computerized job databank so they can get job leads while still in prison. Shawn Bates, CCH's Employment Specialist at Coyote Ridge Corrections Center, gives each student four leads. During the last hour of her half-day prerelease refresher course, she encourages them to call the leads from the institution for appointments. Louis Montano, the CCH Employment Specialist

Exhibit 2. Corrections Clearinghouse prison course enrollments in fiscal year 1997–98

Facility	Courses Offered		Assisted Inmates to Secure Documents	
	Course	Graduates	Social Security Card	Driver's License/State Identification
Tacoma Pre-Release Center	• Transitional Employment • Job Dynamics/Industrial Safety	503 302	380	576
Washington Corrections Center for Women	• Transitional Employment • Job Dynamics	62 591	0	162
Airway Heights Corrections Center	• Transitional Employment • Vocational Assessment • Job Dynamics • Industrial Safety	233 334 662 436	777	524
Pine Lodge Pre-Release Center	• Transitional Employment	626	157	113
Coyote Ridge Corrections Center	• Transitional Employment • Job Dynamics	275 698	178	141
TOTAL		**3,080***	**1,492**	**1,516**

* The same inmate could have enrolled in and completed more than one course at each institution. As a result, to avoid double counting program completers, this figure represents the sum of the most well-attended course at each institution.

at Airway Heights Corrections Center, tells the story of Joe:

> Joe hated the world when he came to my transitional employment class; he just wanted a place to mouth off. But he completed the class, so I told him to take the anger management class, too, which he did. He left here for work release a month ago. But first I set him up with three tree-topping services. I told him, "I'll dial and you talk." So he called from here and stammered through two or three trials. Finally, he got an interview and then ended up with three job offers. Now he's in work release earning $11 an hour.

CCH staff may also provide adults and juveniles with a contact person at an Employment Security Job Service Center or at one of CCH's own Ex-Offender Work Orientation Program contractors.

Postrelease job search assistance: The Ex-Offender Work Orientation Program

CCH contracts with six community-based organizations and one Employment Security Job Service Center to provide job search assistance to adult and juvenile ex-offenders.[1] Known as the "Ex-O" Program, the seven contractors provide individual vocational assessments, job counseling, help with résumé writing and interviewing techniques, job search assistance, and the offer of ongoing postplacement services. The providers also are contracted to provide upgrades for clients—help them gain promotions that involve higher wages. (See "CCH Uses Performance-Based Contracts.") Ex-O counselors inform qualified clients when better jobs become available in other

Juveniles Develop Marketable Skills—and Give Back to the Community

The Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH) has an unusual arrangement at Maple Lane School, one of Washington State's seven juvenile institutions. The school's superintendent and CCH agreed that the facility's basic education instructors, rather than CCH staff, could teach CCH's job readiness curriculum. CCH staff taught the instructors to integrate the curriculum into the institution's regular coursework—for example, infusing résumé writing and completing job applications into English classes.

This approach freed Maple Lane's CCH instructor to establish with the local community vocational programs and job partnerships that could increase inmates' job readiness. The programs also incorporate restorative justice principles: Inmates give back services to the community as well as give half of their $2 per hour wages for restitution and court costs. For example, Maple Lane's Weatherization Through Restorative Justice program is a partnership among the institution, the local school district, the Coastal Community Action Program, the Bonneville (Dam) Power Administration, and CCH to teach on-the-job vocational skills to inmates who furnish weatherization services to elderly and low-income residents in the local community. Startup funding of $28,839 (used mostly for purchasing small handtools) was provided through Maple Lane's education fund and several Federal and State agencies. CCH pulled the program together by resolving security issues, finding equipment, and solving logistical problems.

By summer 1997, 70 offenders had weatherized 19 homes. According to one student:

> Six or seven of us go out in a group and work at least in pairs—for example, laying down plastic on floors. Since it requires teamwork, we learn to compromise. When I get out [of prison], I can show I have experience in the field. Besides, instead of watching TV or sitting in dull classes or my cell, I'm doing something interesting. My attitude changed—I do less arguing, I get along better with people.

An inmate at Airway Heights Corrections Center talks with a service provider to update information in the Corrections Clearinghouse's Case Management Resource Directory about the organization's current services, eligibility requirements, and fees.

companies and instruct them in how to ask for promotions from their existing employers.

Eligible clients include inmates under community supervision and unemployed ex-offenders who have been released within the previous 2 years. Referrals primarily come from community corrections (parole) officers, from work release and prerelease facilities, and by word-of-mouth (walk-ins).

CCH issues requests for proposals for Ex-O services every 2 years and awards the contracts on the basis of the bidders' track records and proposals. Each contractor is awarded between $40,000 and $50,000 per year to hire a full-time employment specialist and pay a portion of the organization's overhead.

Ex-O staff help clients secure a wide variety of jobs offering minimum- to professional-level wages. Jobs include roofing, landscaping, warehouse, restaurant, janitorial, health care, mechanical, and office work.

System Change and Broker Services

CCH brokers a number of services—that is, it acts as the agent for other groups to establish collaborative ventures. CCH staff telephone high-level administrators of two or more groups to explain that they have a common problem they can probably solve if they will meet together. CCH staff arrange a meeting among the groups and sometimes provide several hundred dollars in one-time travel expenses so they can begin working together. CCH staff may or may not attend or facilitate these meetings. The

An inmate at Airway Heights Corrections Center works on aggregating information sent electronically to the prison from the seven Ex-O job placement contractors for inclusion in the Corrections Clearinghouse's MIS.

CCH Uses Performance-Based Contracts

The Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH) negotiates performance-based contracts with six community-based organizations and one Employment Security Job Service Center to provide job search assistance to ex-offenders. If a contractor failed to meet its placement, retention, and upgrade goals, it would lose money. The contract stipulates: "Based on the quarterly monitoring review results, the [Employment Security] Department reserves the right to . . . withhold and reallocate monies from contractors who are not in compliance with their current contract program goals . . . ."

For example, one organization's Table of Monthly Program Projections, included in its annual contract, requires per month seven enrollments, six job placements, and, beginning with month three of the contract, three upgrades. However, each contractor is guaranteed a minimum level of reimbursement regardless of its performance. Douglas Jacques, CCH's Director, explains why CCH emphasizes upgrades—defined as a pay increase and increased responsibility. "Because ex-offenders tend to take the first available job, which could be entry level, we want contractors to continue to work with clients in these low-paying positions to improve their employment situation."

What makes performance contracting possible is CCH's computerized management information system (MIS) that collects and presents monthly data on each contractor's performance. (See the MIS discussion under "Quality control.")

following two undertakings exemplify CCH-brokered activities.

Corrections Alliance

The Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1990 established a Federal program that allocates money to the States for education. In Washington State, the Workforce Education and Training Board receives and disburses the funds—$20 million each year for kindergarten through grade 12 schools, and for community colleges.

The Act requires States to distribute at least 1 percent of their allocation to correctional education programs. However, the Workforce Board was unfamiliar with educational needs in prisons and jails. As a result, Jacques proposed setting up the Corrections Alliance, with broad representation of agencies and rehabilitation experts, to make the funding decisions for the $195,000 annual Perkins set-aside.

Although Alliance members review proposals and decide which programs to fund, Anthony Clarke, CCH Program Manager, coordinates the Alliance's work, chairs its meetings, oversees the bid process, and administers the granting of funds. For example, in negotiating an Alliance contract with one county jail for the purchase of computers, he also negotiated for correctional staff to be trained in computer use so that they in turn could train inmates. He also included a provision that would allow released inmates to continue their training with the provider. As part of a contract to provide literacy training in another jail, Clarke negotiated for employers to come into the jail to help design the curriculum so inmates will learn those skills that the employers need, increasing the inmates' chances of being hired after release. Clarke and Jacques have provided direct technical assistance to at least eight jails for developing inmate education and training curriculums and programs.

According to Jacques: "In most States, the 1-percent set-aside goes into the DOC budget, where it gets lost as a blip on the screen of total dollars. In Washington State, however, the Corrections Alliance uses the money to make a difference by distributing it to local agencies in an effort to promote systemwide change." The Alliance usually awards annual grants as seed money to six to eight organizations. For example, as a result of a $10,000 Alliance grant to the Washington Council on Crime and Delinquency to introduce the State to the concept of jail industries, local sheriffs and police chiefs supported legislation in 1993 to create the Jail Industries Board. The Alliance then awarded a grant to the Jail Industries Board to help two counties establish jail industries. Since then, CCH and the Alliance have provided administrative and program support to the board's ongoing efforts to promote other jail industry startups.

Vocational Opportunity Training and Education

Vocational Opportunity Training and Education (VOTE) is a college program in Tacoma for ex-offenders who are in recovery from chemical dependency. County and nonprofit assessment centers funded by the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse within the State Department of Social and Health Services refer most of the individuals.

The VOTE program provides a 7-week return-to-work workshop that includes vocational interest and employability assessments, development of job search skills, daily job search activities, and assistance with enrolling in GED courses or adult basic skills training programs. Staff also provide counseling to address alcohol and other drug recovery issues. Participants become students at Pierce College, the 2-year institution in Tacoma where VOTE was launched, earning 10 college credits in psychology for completing the program.

CCH contributed to VOTE's initiation and success. Initially, the director of a local vocational program met with two administrators from Pierce College and from the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse to suggest the creation of a pilot job search program for recovering substance abusers. CCH staff found money for the pilot program in the Employment Security Department's budget to match contributions by the division and the college. CCH funded an educator to manage the pilot program and secure staff to teach the job search component. When the program proved successful, the agencies made it permanent. Currently, the program has six staff members, three of whom are program graduates. The manager, who has since become a CCH staff member but is paid by the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, has implemented a similar program in Yakima and is establishing a third in Seattle.

A former student expressed sentiments similar to those of other program participants regarding VOTE's helpfulness:

> VOTE helps you get where you want to go. They give aptitude tests and pass out labor market surveys and labor growth studies. I decided I wanted to do landscaping. I would never have known that landscaping was available to me except for the VOTE aptitude

test. I always thought landscaping was mowing lawns. I graduated from VOTE. Then I went to Tacoma Community College and got a degree in landscape management. VOTE got me into the school and helped me fill out an application for financial aid.

Coordination Services: The Case Management Resource Directory

CCH has coordinated numerous undertakings, but one in particular stands out: the Case Management Resource Directory. The directory is a listing of 2,500 resources in Washington—from free clothing to substance abuse treatment—that people can use to steer clients to sources for needed help. Users can access the resources by county, ZIP code, or type of service. The directory is available for sale in hard copy and on disk. In addition to corrections employment specialists, welfare offices and vocational rehabilitation agencies use the directory.

The electronic version of the directory is available for Macintosh, DOS, and Windows® applications. After locating the specific resources a client needs, agency staff can print the information for the client. The photograph on the next page shows a screen from the disk displaying the kind of information the directory provides for each resource agency—name, telephone number, hours, fees, services and programs, eligibility requirements, and types of clients it serves.

In 1994, CCH staff arranged for Airway Heights Corrections Center administrators and the local college's inmate computer instructor to create an electronic version of the directory. The instructor devised a prison industry program involving six inmates, directing them to:

- Design and write the computer software for the disk version of the directory.
- Integrate new resources into the directory by obtaining the names and addresses of organizations from telephone books and preexisting directories and mailing them forms requesting basic information about themselves.
- Proofread to ensure that resources are not duplicated in the directory.
- Update the entries quarterly by mailing or faxing requests for changes of address and services to each resource listed in the directory. "We get a good response on the updates," one inmate reports, "because there is no charge for being listed and it's a good way for providers to get clients."
- Test a pilot system in which inmates call (rather than write) programs listed in the directory to obtain updated information about their services.
- Staff the toll-free telephone and fax lines for ordering copies, receiving updates, and adding resources.
- Design and print a brochure advertising the directory.
- Fill orders for the directory, including tracking the orders and packaging and shipping the directory. (The printing is contracted to another Washington State prison that has a printing department.)

Inmates who work on the directory report that they feel they are doing something positive for other inmates and the community. As a result, CCH staff feel the inmates' efforts fit nicely with the principles of restorative justice—repaying the community as a whole for their crimes—as well as providing a service to other inmates.

CCH charges $25 for the hard copy of the directory and $20 for the four quarterly (updated) disks. Corrections agencies receive the directory for free. As of mid-1997, CCH had received 433 orders for the hard copy and 132 orders for the disk (excluding free copies distributed to Ex-O contractors and others). The $11,630 CCH received in sales in 1997 offset the costs for production and distribution. In addition, the directory is currently being converted into a program that will allow other jurisdictions to customize it to build their own resource directories. (See "Directory Will Be Available Nationwide.")

Organization, Staffing, and Costs

CCH has a total of 23 professional staff members, including:

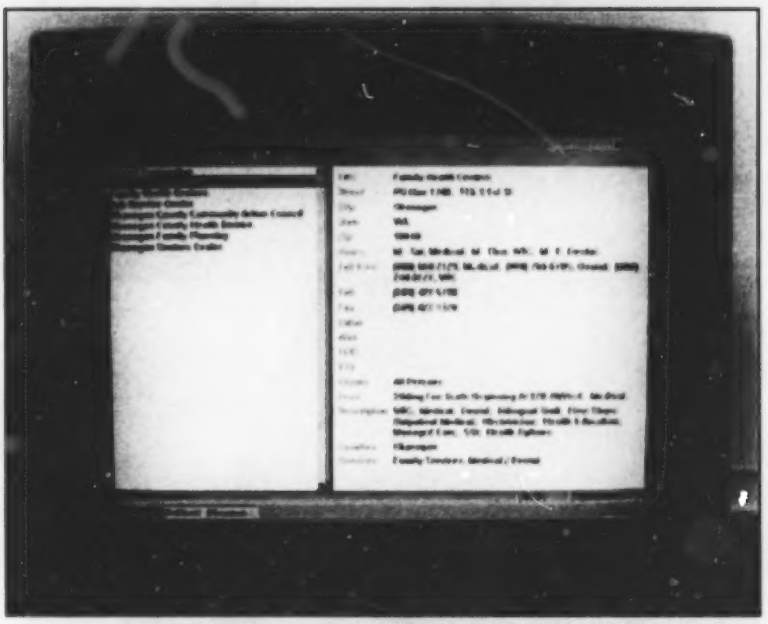
- Six administrative staff members.
- Two regional operations managers.
- Eight employment specialists in five adult prisons.
- Four employment specialists in seven juvenile facilities.
- Two employment specialists in a day reporting and work release center.
- One contract testing manager.

Exhibit 1 shows the interrelationships among the staff. Douglas Jacques, as Director of CCH, focuses on efforts to place or expand CCH programs in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities. "I try to knock down barriers, whether they are institutional objections to hosting a CCH program or difficulty obtaining funding," Jacques says. Other staff share responsibility for program implementation.

Quality control

How does CCH exercise quality control over such a multifaceted and geographically dispersed program? The program has two full-time regional operations managers—Mollie Patshkowski and Tamara Gillespie. Each handles half of the State, visiting each institution in her region at least weekly to talk with staff, prison administrators, and inmates and periodically observing classes. According to Stephen Ringo, an instructor at Pine Lodge Pre-Release Center: "Mollie visits me, looks through my enrollment forms to see if they are accurate and complete, checks some completed student résumés, and makes sure the data I have turned in match the data in my files. The regional staff and Doug [Jacques] have also sat in on my classes." Patshkowski and Gillespie report to Jeffrey Johnston, CCH's Operations Manager. Known as the "Traveling Man," Johnston also visits program sites, dropping in on classes unannounced.

CCH encourages institutional personnel to report any problems with CCH staff. In fact, Anthony Clarke says: "It is usually DOC staff who warn us of a problem staff member." For instance, an institution staff member's reports of inmate complaints about a CCH instructor led to the person being fired after further investigation.



A computer screen from the Corrections Clearinghouse's Case Management Resource Directory provides detailed information about a health care organization, such as location, hours of operation, fees, and services.

Directory Will Be Available Nationwide

In 1997, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) provided funding to CCH (which in turn has collaborated with the Institute of Extended Learning, the Community College of Spokane, and Airway Heights Corrections Center) to convert the Case Management Resource Directory into a computer program that States, counties, or any other geographic areas could customize for their jurisdictions using inmate labor. The generic version will enable other prisons and jails to provide additional inmate training and work opportunities, while at the same time providing a valuable public service. Upon completion of the 18-month project, NIC's Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement expects to seek funding to provide technical assistance to State and local correctional systems wanting to implement the system.

To monitor Ex-O contractor performance, Johnston uses a five-page checklist to review a sample of ex-offender files from randomly selected contractors to ensure they are following established procedures. He also calls 3 percent of contractor clients annually to ask about their satisfaction with the services they received. On one occasion, Johnston discovered through these personal surveys that an Ex-O employment specialist was lying about finding jobs for clients; the person was fired.

CCH conducts an annual review of Ex-O contractor files, including comparisons of provided services billed on invoices with those listed in client records in the database. Staff are also planning to call a sample of employers each year to verify that they have hired the clients Ex-O contractors reported they placed in jobs.

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CCH's management information system (MIS) also provides quality control. The MIS collects from facilities and Ex-O contractors information on participants' educational level and training entered and completed—including placement in classes or work, services provided, job upgrade information, and 15- and 45-day followup information. Each facility and contractor records the information on forms and sends them in hard copy or electronic version to Airway Heights Corrections Center. Inmate students in the computer laboratory input, aggregate, and report the data. (Inmates themselves developed a system for keeping inmates' names separate from the data to maintain confidentiality.) CCH mails the information each month to the facilities, Ex-O contractors, and the two regional operations managers.

On one occasion, the data showed that placement rates had plummeted at one prison, along with the number of program participants and graduates. As a result, CCH replaced two staff members at the facility with more experienced staff from another facility. The following year's data showed improvement.

Costs

Exhibit 3 presents funding sources and planned expenditures for CCH's $3,209,131 budget for 1997–99. The program receives slightly more than half of its funding from the Employment Security Department's Penalty and Interest Fund. Employers who are delinquent in paying their State unemployment insurance taxes pay penalties and interest into the fund. The Department of Social and Health Services provides CCH with $644,992, but the State legislature mandates that the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration set aside $500,000 of this amount for CCH services for juveniles. The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse provides the department's remaining $144,992 for the VOTE program.

In fiscal year 1996–97, CCH spent $361,500 on the Ex-O contractors. In helping 776 ex-offenders secure jobs, CCH's cost per placement was $465; with an enrollment of 1,312 ex-offenders, its cost per enrollee was $276.

Widespread support

Why has the State legislature been willing to support CCH? According to Ida Ballasiotes, co-chair of the State House of Representatives Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee: "We want to get inmates jobs so they won't come back, so we go to the source that is best able to provide them with job preparation and job search skills—CCH." The legislature's confidence in CCH is based on the program's evaluation data (see "Assessing CCH's Success"), which the committee has requested each year since 1991.

The agencies that fund CCH share this high regard for its services. Jean Stewart, Educational Services Administrator for DOC, says: "CCH staff are the experts in labor market information, so they're in a good position to advise offenders and ex-offenders about jobs, something DOC staff can't do as well. They also have access to JobNet." Joseph Lehman, Secretary of DOC, says:

> The Clearinghouse is definitely beneficial to us. In many cases, corrections focuses only on improving offenders' academic and vocational skills—which is important—but we fail to help them establish links to the real world through employment. These links are critical because they give ex-offenders a stake in the noncriminal, conventional world through the income they earn, the relationships they form, and the recognition they gain through paid, meaningful employment. The Clearinghouse helps inmates with both issues—skills development and work linkages.

Robin Cummings, Chief of Community Services at the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, adds: "In an effort to improve the training capacity of our own staff, CCH has trained some of our counselors not only to help our juveniles to become job ready but also to work with employment supervisors in the facilities, like the cooks, to better prepare these juveniles for the marketplace."

Assessing CCH's Success

CCH managers acknowledge that their program monitoring and evaluation efforts have been inadequate. These weaknesses reflect a publicly stated 10-year policy to use scarce financial resources to provide more services to offenders rather than build a sophisticated MIS and evaluation system. Despite these shortcomings, CCH's commitment to collecting and analyzing program data to the fullest extent possible has resulted in promising evaluation findings.

Promising evaluation results

In fiscal year 1997–98, at least 3,080 inmates completed a CCH program. More than 80 percent of institutional enrollees completed their CCH programs. CCH

Stephen Ringo, a Corrections Clearinghouse Employment Specialist at Pine Lodge Pre-Release Center near Spokane, helps a student inmate develop an effective résumé.

staff also assisted 1,492 inmates in securing Social Security cards, 1,516 in obtaining driver's licenses or other State of Washington identification, and 179 in registering with JobNet.[2]

CCH and DOC staff in institutions tend to refer inmates who need the most attention to Ex-O contractors, rather than to the Employment Security Job Service Centers. Despite working with the most disadvantaged ex-offenders, Ex-O contractors have consistently exceeded their enrollment and placement performance goals and come close to or exceeded their upgrade goals. For example, in 1996–97, the seven contractors exceeded their enrollment goal by more than 50 percent and exceeded their placement goal by nearly 50 percent. They achieved 90 percent of their upgrade goal.

Exhibit 4 presents the seven Ex-O contractors' achievements from 1989 through 1997. In fiscal year 1996–97, the organizations enrolled 1,312 ex-offenders (regardless of whether they received CCH services while incarcerated), 59 percent of whom found work. Of these, 99 percent were still employed after 15 days, and 68 percent after 45 days. More than 20 percent of those who found work achieved employment upgrades. The average starting wage for employed clients was approximately $6.76 an hour; they worked an average of 39 hours per week.

CCH studied 116 representative ex-offenders who were enrolled in the Ex-O program from October 1995 to June 1997 and who had been released or were in work release for a period of 8 to 24 months. While the study was short term and just descriptive, the followup data are encouraging because only two participants were known to have committed new crimes and been reincarcerated.[3]

The Ex-O program appears to be cost effective. A 1993 study conducted by CCH staff with the assistance of DOC's Office of Research compared the recidivism rates of 500 Ex-O clients who found employment with the historical recidivism rate among all department releasees. (Recidivism—defined as a return to DOC custody—excluded ex-offenders who might have been jailed.) The recidivism rate for the Ex-O clients after 1 year was 3 percent, compared with 10 percent for all releasees; after 5 years, the recidivism rate was 15 percent for the Ex-O clients compared with 30 percent for all releasees. However, the study did not control for selection bias among the Ex-O clients.

Another study suggests that the VOTE program may reduce recidivism. The Department of Social and Health Services conducted a 15-month followup study of indigent persons served by the State's Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Treatment and Support Act (ADATSA). The study compared clients from three vocational programs: 133 clients who participated in a traditional vocational rehabilitation program for individuals still in treatment; 227 clients who completed treatment and participated in a program that offered vocational rehabilitation services and a motivational and skills workshop; and 398 VOTE clients. The clients from all three programs were compared with 167 ADATSA clients who did not receive vocational services. Comparison cases lived in the same geographic areas served by the three programs and had completed substance abuse treatment. Instead of matching clients demographically, the researchers used multivariate analysis to assess the effects of variables. Up to 15 months after treatment, 24 percent of persons completing the VOTE program were employed (i.e., working at least half time consistently for up to 15 months after receiving treatment and vocational services) compared with 17 and 9 percent of persons involved in the two traditional programs and 9 percent of persons in the comparison group. Long-term employment outcomes were not statistically correlated with work experience, prior welfare status, ethnicity, age, education, or type of drug used. However, selection bias still might have explained some of VOTE's superior performance, because the program screens for the quality of the client's recovery process and, in

Exhibit 3. Corrections Clearinghouse budget, 1997–99

Funding Source	How the Money Is Spent	Total Allocation
I. Penalty and Interest Fund Allocation		
CCH—Coordination, Current Level[a]	$695,600	
CCH—Career Preparedness[b]	$320,600	
Ex-Offender Work Orientation Program	$781,300	
Total Penalty and Interest Funds		$1,797,500
II. Department of Corrections Contract Allocation		
Tacoma Pre-Release Center	$120,563	
Pine Lodge Pre-Release Center	$ 62,026	
Coyote Ridge Corrections Center	$ 57,278	
Airway Heights Corrections Center	$198,377	
Washington Corrections Center for Women	$ 37,415	
Total DOC Contracts		$475,659
III. Department of Social and Health Services		
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration		$500,000
Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (VOTE)		$144,992
IV. Carl Perkins Set-Aside (Corrections Alliance)		$190,980
V. Jail Industries Board		$100,000
Total CCH Allocation		**$3,209,131**

a. The funds for "CCH—Coordination" pay for CCH central office staff and direct costs (e.g., telephone, travel, duplication).

b. The funds for "CCH—Career Preparedness" are used in part to fund positions for two staff members who provide offender job preparation and search services in a Seattle work release center and a day reporting center. The CCH—Career Preparedness funds also supplement the CCH—Coordination funds to support central office staff salaries and direct costs.

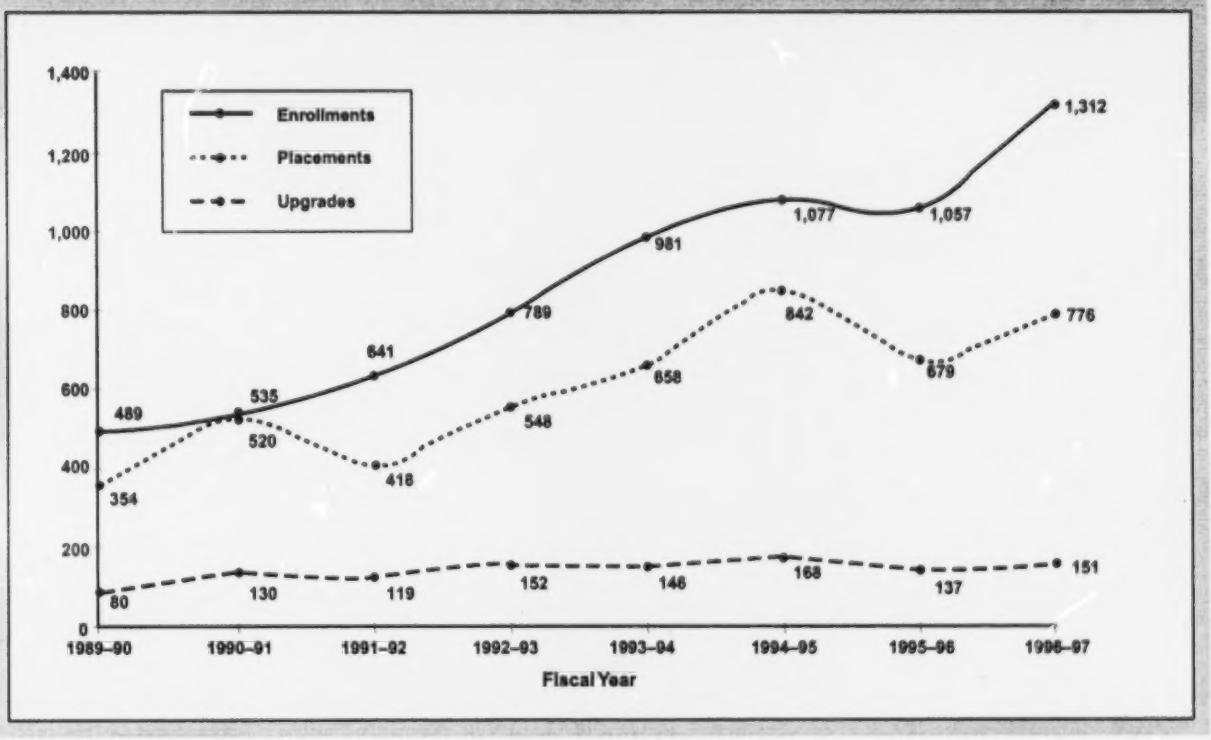
doing so, may select clients who are more likely to succeed in employment in the long term.

Ongoing program weaknesses

CCH does have weaknesses. Because of a lack of funding, only the Washington Corrections Center for Women and Airway Heights Corrections Center administer an employability intake assessment—the essential starting point for providing a continuum of services. Budget cuts prevented DOC from funding a $52,000 CCH proposal to hire staff at two DOC reception centers to assess all incoming inmates. Funding limitations also prevent CCH from providing services in every facility. In addition, there are no Ex-O contractors in nine counties with a total of 20 percent of the State's population; a State House of Representatives bill to award contracts in these counties died in committee. Also, Anthony Clarke and some Ex-O contractor staff agree that problems with the MIS's accuracy and completeness have been found. CCH does not actively contact placed Ex-O clients to check their progress and identify additional support needed—a significant gap in the attempt to provide a continuum of services to ex-offenders.

Of greatest concern, CCH's institution programs are not offered in 8 of the State's 15 institutions. Jacques says: "The Clearinghouse is in the institutions at the superintendents' discretion—they can choose to have us in or not; we're a guest in the house of corrections." As a result, "the Corrections Clearinghouse is still a work in progress." However, CCH is well entrenched in the Washington Corrections Center for Women and Airway Heights Corrections Center, provides services in every juvenile facility, contributes to the development of jail industries and employment readiness programs, and offers job search assistance to a significant proportion of the State's ex-offenders. Furthermore, CCH is still negotiating to bring its own—and, especially, other agencies'—

Exhibit 4. Ex-Offender Work Orientation Program enrollments, placements, and upgrades, 1989–97



resources into every institution and to assist releasees in every county in Washington. In this regard, Jacques expresses some reluctance about CCH developing too large a staff and "becoming another big State agency." He says: "I would rather see us as a small, streamlined catalyst for change rather than a big division providing 'cookie cutter' employment services in a large State employment department."

Replicating the CCH Model

According to Jacques, there are several keys to a successful CCH-type program:

- Make sure the top clearinghouse administrators know about security and public safety; that is of paramount importance in any program run in a correctional facility.
- Bring every possible participant to the table, even the naysayers, and see how they can become involved.
- Develop a tendency to "go for it": always ask, "Why not?" not "Why?"

Given the multiplicity and geographic dispersion of CCH activities, how can another jurisdiction begin to replicate CCH? According to Jacques: "Begin at the beginning and the end—with assessment and job placement—then move toward the middle." The necessary tasks include the following:

- Administer an employability assessment at the reception unit, ideally with every inmate. Use the results to help the department of corrections decide what training and work programs are needed, to target inmates with inappropriate attitudes toward work for employability training, and to match inmates with appropriate work within the institutions.
- At the other end of the continuum, create immediate results by providing a job placement component through community-based organizations that are already doing similar work.
- Fill in the middle over time with preemployment training and other needed institutional and postrelease activities.

Jacques believes that the CCH concept "is replicable anywhere at either the State or local level if you define the concept not as a single program shouldering the entire burden for service delivery but as the idea of helping offenders become employable through any available resources and means."[4] (See "Resources for Replicating the Corrections Clearinghouse.") But, Jacques adds:

> It takes someone willing to make it his or her mission to link different agencies together to achieve the common goal of reducing recidivism. It also requires collaborators who don't answer, "No," to new ideas but [who] have a frame of mind that instead says, "Why not?" unless they can find a legitimate reason for saying "No."

Among the "yessayers" in Washington State were the DOC Secretary, the Deputy Commissioner of Employment Security, and superintendents of individual DOC facilities. CCH has also been fortunate to deal with legislators who support inmate programming.

"There's nothing unique to Washington State about all this," Jacques continues. "There are talented people in every State with initiative and desire to do this." And while Jacques was fortunate enough to have a background in corrections and employment services, he says: "You could also run a clearinghouse with two people codirecting it—a DOC and [an] Employment Security person." Furthermore, legislators usually can be found in most jurisdictions who have, or can be helped to develop, a keen interest in correctional programming. This has been the case in the States of Delaware and Texas, and Orange County (Orlando), Florida. (See "Related Publications of Interest" and "The Corrections Clearinghouse in Context.")

Related Publications of Interest

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) of the U.S. Department of Justice, as well as the U.S. Department of Education Office of Correctional Education (OCE), have individually and jointly sponsored the following publications that may be of interest to employment and corrections professionals who are involved in offender job training, placement, and retention. For a free copy of these publications, write the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) at Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849–6000. You may also call NCJRS at 800–851–3420 or send an e-mail to askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

Work in American Prisons: Joint Ventures With the Private Sector, Program Focus, 1995 (NCJ 156215).

Project Re-Enterprise: A Texas Program, Program Focus, 1996 (NCJ 161448).

Work Release: Recidivism and Corrections Costs in Washington State, Research in Brief, 1996 (NCJ 163706).

Labor Markets, Employment, and Crime, Research in Progress Preview, 1997 (FS 000166).

The Orange County, Florida, Jail Educational and Vocational Programs, Program Focus, 1997 (NCJ 166820).

Successful Job Placement for Ex-Offenders: The Center for Employment Opportunities, Program Focus, 1998 (NCJ 168102).

Texas' Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders), Program Focus, 1998 (NCJ 168637).

Chicago's Safer Foundation: A Road Back for Ex-Offenders, Program Focus, 1998 (NCJ 167575).

The Delaware Department of Correction Life Skills Program, Program Focus, 1998 (NCJ 169589).

The Corrections Clearinghouse in Context

The Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH) provides services both within institutions—job preparation courses—and after release—job search assistance. What evidence is there that either of these approaches reduces recidivism?

Institutional education programs

A large number of studies have examined whether educational programs for inmates—some of which include job preparation components—reduce recidivism. However, most of these studies have been inconclusive because of methodological weaknesses, such as use of small samples, short postrelease followup periods, failure to assign inmates randomly to treatment and control groups, and inadequate statistical tests to ensure that the findings did not occur by chance. As a result, the researchers could not prove that the reason the inmates did not commit new crimes was because the programs changed the inmates' behavior. Inmates who enrolled in the programs may have been so highly motivated to succeed that most of them would not have reoffended even if they had not participated in the programs.[a]

Nevertheless, several studies that were more methodologically sound suggest that at least some educational programs may reduce recidivism for some inmates:

- A study of Federal inmates that attempted to control for selection bias found that inmates who participated in prison education programs were less likely to reoffend.[b]
- A study of Wisconsin inmates concluded that prison education programs are cost effective because they reduce recidivism or increase the time period before releasees return to prison.[c]
- A review of seven recidivism studies that used control groups, statistical controls, and tests of significance reported that three of the studies found no relationship between participation in institutional education programs and recidivism, but four showed strong relationships.[d]

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Correctional Education and the Correctional Education Association are working jointly on a project that is examining the impact of correctional education on recidivism rates. This 30-month study's sample includes every person scheduled to leave three State correctional systems (Maryland, Minnesota, and Ohio) over the course of several weeks. Each State will randomly select 1,000 inmates who are within 3 months of release, regardless of whether they participated in educational programming, to compare the postrelease success of those who participated with those who did not.

The project will consist of two data collection phases:

- The first phase will include giving the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to each member of the cohort as a means of establishing academic competencies. This testing will be followed by surveys of each member of the cohort regarding his or her personal characteristics, family situation, education experiences, and involvement in drug and alcohol treatment.
- The second phase of data collection will involve searches of local, State, and national crime information databases for rearrest and reincarceration rates. This phase will include surveys of probation and parole staff to determine the success rate of a sample of the study participants in obtaining and retaining employment.

Job placement

Most evaluations of programs designed to reduce recidivism through job placement have also had methodological weaknesses.[e] Studies with adequate designs have not usually found that ex-offenders who find jobs are less likely than other offenders to commit new crimes. For example, a controlled experiment at 16 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) sites failed to find evidence of positive effects on subsequent arrests for out-of-school youths with arrest records.[f]

By contrast, a study of the use of income supplements,[g] as well as other research, found that ex-offenders with jobs tend to commit fewer crimes than ex-offenders without jobs, and those with higher earnings commit fewer crimes than those with lower earnings. Furthermore, a 1992 study of Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders),[h] a statewide program run by the Texas Workforce Commission that provides job placement services to more than 15,000 parolees each year, found that during the year after release only 48 percent of high-risk RIO participants were rearrested, compared with 57 percent of nonprogram high-risk parolees; 23 percent of the RIO participants were reincarcerated, compared with 38 percent of non-RIO parolees. Although parolees in the study were not assigned randomly to control and treatment groups, the two groups of ex-offenders studied had similar demographic characteristics and risks of reoffending.

Related research

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University has developed the Opportunity to Succeed (OPTS) program, which is designed to reduce substance abuse relapse and criminal recidivism by providing comprehensive aftercare services to felony offenders with histories of alcohol and drug offenses. Aftercare services include mandatory treatment, employability training, placement in drug-free housing, family intervention services, and medical and mental health services.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has funded five OPTS demonstration programs and, with the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), has provided funding to The Urban Institute to evaluate the program's effectiveness. The OPTS evaluation collected self-reported information from a sample of 398 substance abusing felony offenders who had been randomly assigned to either OPTS or routine supervision (standard services typically associated with probation and parole). A preliminary analysis of 261 cases (139 OPTS clients and 122 routine supervision cases) resulted in the following statistically significant findings:

- Eighty-two percent of the OPTS group, compared with 73 percent of the routine supervision group, had a full-time job during their first year of community-based supervision.
- OPTS clients were employed full time for an average of 6.4 months during their first year, compared with 5.1 months for the routine supervision group.
- More OPTS clients than persons in routine supervision reported improvements in their ability to identify job openings, complete job applications, and successfully interview. More also reported improvements in job-related behavior, such as consistently arriving on time for work and receiving positive reviews or increased responsibilities because they were doing a good job.[i]

Two carefully designed evaluations of Washington State's work release program, both sponsored by NIJ and conducted between 1991 and 1994, found that the program did not reduce offender recidivism. However, the program achieved its most important goal—preparing inmates for final release and facilitating their successful transition to the community. While in the program, most of these inmates maintained employment, reconnected with their local communities, paid for their room and board, and remained drug free. Furthermore, the program did not cost the State more than if the releasees had remained in prison.[j]

Notes

a. There are several reviews of the available research. For example, see Bushway, S., and P. Reuter, "Labor Markets and Crime Risk Factors," in *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising*, ed. L. Sherman, D. Gottfredson, D. MacKenzie, J. Eck, P. Reuter, and S. Bushway, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 1997, NCJ 165366; Flanagan, T.J., "Prison Education Research Project: Final Report," Huntsville, Texas: Sam Houston State University, 1994; and Office of Correctional Education, "Recidivism Study Summaries," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, n.d.

b. Harer, M.D., "Recidivism Among Federal Prison Releasees in 1987: A Preliminary Report," unpublished paper, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Office of Research and Evaluation, March 1994.

c. Piehl, A.M., "Learning While Doing Time," unpublished paper, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, April 1994. See also Adams, K., K.J. Bennett, T.J. Flanagan, J.W. Marquart, S. Cuvelier, E.J. Fritsch, J. Gerber, D.R. Longmire, and V.S. Burton, Jr., "Large-Scale Multidimensional Test of the Effect of Prison Education Programs on Offenders' Behavior," *Prison Journal* 74(4) (1994): 433–449; Gerber, J., and E.J. Fritsch, "Adult Academic and Vocational Correctional Education Programs: A Review of Recent Research," *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* 22(1/2) (1995): 119–142; and Flanagan, *Prison Education Research Project Final Report.*

d. Gerber and Fritsch, "Adult Academic and Vocational Correctional Education Programs: A Review of Recent Research."

e. Sherman et al., *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising.*

f. Bloom, H., L.O. Orr, G. Cave, S.H. Bell, F. Doolittle, and W. Lin, "The National JTPA Study: Overview: Impacts, Benefits and Costs of Title II–A," Cambridge, Massachusetts: Abt Associates Inc., 1994.

g. Berk, R.A., J.J. Lenihan, and R.H. Rossi, "Crime and Poverty: Some Experimental Evidence from Ex-Offenders," *American Sociological Review* 45 (1980): 766–786.

h. Menon, R., C. Blakely, D. Carmichael, and L. Silver, *An Evaluation of Project RIO Outcomes: An Evaluation Report*, College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University, Public Policy Resources Laboratory, July 1992.

i. Rossman, S., S. Sridharan, and G. Buck, "The Impact of the Opportunity to Succeed Program on Employment Success," *National Institute of Justice Journal* 236 (1998): 14–20.

j. Turner, S., and J. Petersilia, *Work Release: Recidivism and Corrections Costs in Washington State*, Research in Brief, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1996, NCJ 163706.

Resources for Replicating the Corrections Clearinghouse

For program literature describing the **Corrections Clearinghouse** and telephone consultation regarding how to replicate the program, contact:

Douglas Jacques
Director
Corrections Clearinghouse
Washington State Employment Security Department
605 Woodland Square Loop S.E.
P.O. Box 9046
Olympia, WA 98507–9046
Telephone: 360–438–4060
Fax: 360–438–3216

The **National Institute of Justice (NIJ)** is the principal research, evaluation, and development agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. For information about NIJ's efforts in corrections, program development, and corporate partnership development, contact:

Development Division
National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531
Telephone: 202–514–6686
Fax: 202–307–6256

Visit NIJ's Web site (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij) for the latest information on NIJ research, programs, and grant opportunities.

NIJ established the **National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)** in 1972 to serve as a national and international clearinghouse for the exchange of criminal justice information. For more information about topical searches, bibliographies, custom searches, and other available services, contact:

NCJRS
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849–6000

Telephone: 800–851–3420 (8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday)

For specific criminal justice questions or requests via the Internet, send an e-mail message to asknejrs@ncjrs.org.

The **National Institute of Corrections (NIC)** offers literature searches and free technical assistance on inmate programming. For more information, contact:

NIC Information Center
National Institute of Corrections
1960 Industrial Circle, Suite A
Longmont, CO 80501
Telephone: 800–877–1461

The **Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement** within NIC was created in March 1995 to:

- Cooperate with and coordinate the efforts of other Federal agencies in the areas of job training and placement.
- Collect and disseminate information on offender job training and placement programs, accomplishments, and employment outcomes.
- Provide training to develop staff competencies in working with offenders and ex-offenders.
- Provide technical assistance to State and local training and employment agencies.

For more information, contact:

John Moore
Coordinator
Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement
National Institute of Corrections
320 First Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20534
Telephone: 800–995–6423, Ext. 147

The **Office of Correctional Education (OCE)** within the U.S. Department of Education was created by Congress in 1991 to provide technical assistance, grant funding, and research data to the corrections and correctional education fields. To speak with a program specialist or be placed on OCE's mailing list to receive grant announcements, OCE's quarterly newsletter, and other publications, contact:

Office of Correctional Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
MES 4529
Washington, DC 20202–7242
Telephone: 202–205–5621
Fax: 202–401–2615
URL: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/OCE

The **Correctional Education Association (CEA)** is affiliated with the American Correctional Association as an international professional organization serving education program needs within the field of corrections. Membership includes teachers and other community corrections programs. Members receive quarterly journals and newsletters, an annual directory, and a yearbook. Annual conferences are held in each of CEA's nine regions and many of its State chapters. One of the regions hosts an international conference that features a variety of workshops regarding successful strategies. For more information, call 301–918–1915.

The **National Association of Workforce Development Professionals** is the membership organization that represents all individuals involved in workforce development. Workforce development professionals assist individuals in identifying, attaining, and maintaining employment and self-sufficiency. For more information, contact:

C. Paul Mendez
Executive Director
National Association of Workforce Development Professionals
1620 Eye Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20006–4005
Telephone: 202–887–6120
Fax: 202–887–8216
E-mail: nawdp@aol.com

Notes

1. Technically, "ex-offenders" who are in work release are still inmates because they are living in a Department of Corrections institution. Furthermore, a small proportion of these work release inmates never become ex-offenders—they fail the work release program and return to regular prison.

2. While it may seem as if CCH is reaching only a small portion of all inmates, as Anthony Clarke, Program Manager, points out: "You have to remember that most inmates either are not eligible to participate because of their security level [e.g., administrative segregation] or refuse to participate because they are not interested or have more attractive institutional opportunities [e.g., paid work assignments]."

3. In future research, it is essential for the program to learn whether ex-offenders who are assessed by CCH while incarcerated are more successful in securing and maintaining employment after release than ex-offenders who have not been assessed.

4. According to Anthony Clarke: "The Corrections Clearinghouse's budget is for coordination. If another jurisdiction were to replicate the program, it should keep the word coordination in the budget authorization because it is broad enough to cover all kinds of useful interactions."

About This Study

This Program Focus was prepared by Peter Finn, Research Associate, Abt Associates Inc. This project was supported by NIJ contract number OJP–94–C–007.

On the cover: Louis Montano, a Corrections Clearinghouse Employment Specialist at Airway Heights Corrections Center near Spokane, offers advice to an inmate about a community job opportunity described in the Employment Security Department's job bank.

All photos by Rick Singer Photography.

Findings and conclusions of the research reported here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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